

Warwickshire Waste Partnership

Wednesday 14 June 2023

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Warwickshire County Council

Councillor Heather Timms (Chair)

Councillor Tim Sinclair

Andrew Pau, Head of Waste and Environment

Ruth Dixon, Lead Commissioner - Waste Strategy and Contracts

Isabelle Moorhouse, Democratic Services Officer

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Councillor Margaret Bell

Cath James, Interim Corporate Director – Streetscape

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Councillor Sue Markham

Glen McGrandle, Head of Waste and Transport

Rugby Borough Council

Councillor Carolyn Watson-Merret

Stratford District Council

Councillor Lorraine Grocott

Julie Lewis, Head of Environmental and Operational Services

Warwick District Council

Councillor Will Roberts

Zoe Court, Contract Services Manager

Steve Partner,

1. General

(1) Apologies

Claire Preston (RBC)

Anton Cuscito (RBC)

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Chair's Announcement

None.

(4) Minutes of the previous meeting, including matters arising

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

2. Welcome and introduction to new members

The Chair introduced herself and explained that this meeting was in person as there were new members to the partnership. Everyone introduced themselves.

3. Waste Management Performance Data 2022-2023 and national benchmarking (2021/22)

Andrew Pau summarised the following points:

- All the statistics in this paper come from the boroughs and districts and WCC. This is shown at every meeting.
- Total household waste had dropped by 23,000 tonnes since last year. Waste reduction schemes carried out by the partners and external factors, possibly the cost-of-living crisis, caused this.
- The overall recycling, reuse and composting rate was up. Composting levels were down in terms of tonnage as 2022/23 had a very dry summer. They are expected to be higher in 2023/24.
- The amount of kgs of residual waste per household had reduced.
- The dry recycling rate was not as high as the Councils would like it to be, but it was good that the overall recycling/reusing/composting rate was 50.6%, as it was expected to be below 50%.
- Landfill rates were reducing.
- The HWRC recycling rates were not as high as the Council would like them to be.
- Trade waste is not included in the report as it is not household waste.

In response to Councillor Tim Sinclair, Andrew Pau stated that historically people bought less in economic hardships.

In response to Councillor Sue Markham, Andrew Pau said that rates were up despite tonnages being down was because this was relative to the overall waste arisings.

Following a supplementary question from Councillor Margaret Bell, Andrew Pau noted that the tonnage decreases on things like 'energy from waste' were high and the 9% decrease in overall waste was high.

Ruth Dixon clarified that the percentage in the report showed the point change so it should not add up.

Andrew Pau added that landfill waste was solely made up of household waste; the aim was to keep this below 10% which they were actively managing.

Julie Lewis noted that the landfill rate did not take the number of households in Warwickshire into account; especially in Warwick District which had the most households.

Councillor Sinclair requested figures from prior to 2021 and suggested that once a year the second table be in graph form.

Ruth Dixon informed the partnership that Warwickshire ranked 11/33 in terms of recycling rates for disposal authorities. Stratford and Warwick Districts were 22nd and 32nd out of 210 waste collection authorities for recycling rate. However, this was old information, it is predicted that SDC may be back in the top 10 for 2022/23.

An updated set of statistics and comparison data will be presented at September's meeting.

SDC and WDCs waste collection

Julie Lewis summarised that:

- SDC and WDC have a joint waste collection contract with Biffa and a new 1-2-3 + waste collection scheme. Food waste is collected separately and weekly, recycling is collected fortnightly and residual waste is collected every three weeks. There is an opt-in paid-for fortnightly garden waste collection.
- WDC had the biggest changes, changing from a kerbside sort recycling collection to a single comingled wheelie bin and introducing garden waste subscription as well as the changed also introduced in SDC, as above.
- In WDC the residual waste bin capacity is 180 litres. In SDC, households have kept their 240 litre grey bins but replacement bins are now 180 litres.
- Before the introduction of the system, some residents raised concerns that their residual waste capacity would be too low. However, there is now high satisfaction with the new system and residual waste has dropped with the three weekly collections in 180l bins (3).
- WDC did not need to separate their dry recyclables anymore and it now comingles in one bin every two weeks (2).
- The Councils do a weekly food waste collection as it was expected to become government legislation. This was also to remove it from residual waste. Indoor caddies and outdoor bins were distributed to every household in the two districts (1).
- Both authorities have charges for green waste collection which is an optional add on (+)
- 1-2-3 + started in August 2022.
- When the Councils started there were issues as there was a driver shortage, new collection vehicles were stuck in Ukraine because of the war and inflation with wages was an issue.
- Statistics show that residual waste is falling monthly. This is in part because of the weekly food waste collection.
- The only issue with the food waste collection was that not every resident got their bins in time for the first collection.
- Recycling rates increased more at WDC then SDC, as predicted.

In response to Councillor Bell, Julie Lewis confirmed that they had to buy separate food waste collection trucks. Originally a separate pod on the normal collection vehicles was proposed like at Daventry but this was not the preferred option for the refuse collection companies bidding for the contract. In the run-up to the service change, residents were given a hard copy calendar showing when each bin would be collected. Now there is an app (Cloud 9, which is also used by RBC) which tells residents which bin needs putting out; calendars are still available online.

In response to Councillor Carolyn Watson-Merret, Julie Lewis noted that when food is separated it makes people realise how much they are wasting, and the councils are aiming to increase food waste reduction at the same time as capturing for recycling all of the food waste that is generated.

Following a question from Councillor Sinclair, Julie Lewis said that they would print and send out calendars for residents who request them. Some households qualified for 240 litre refuse waste bins like households with six adults, households with more than two children in nappies or medical needs. They would need to request these, and the use of these bins would be under review. Households have to pay for additional bins but not the service.

In response to Councillor Lorraine Grocott, Julie Lewis clarified that households could have requested additional recycling bins when the new system started and still can. The council will pick up side recycling too because they want to encourage recycling.

Andrew Pau noted that the three weekly collections made people think what they were doing with their residual waste. This improved Stratford and Warwick's household waste statistics and recycling rates.

Julie Lewis added that Stratford and Warwick's garden waste rates had decreased a lot last year because of the dry summer. It varied annually so it could not be added to the dry recyclables rates.

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Councillor Richard Baxter-Payne said that garden waste could not easily go to an anaerobic digestion facility centre because a different licence would be needed for this. If a digester was going to make energy from food waste, then its contents had to be solely food waste. It would also affect the byproducts. Therefore, garden waste could not be mixed with food waste in an anaerobic digester.

Andrew Pau added that wood and twigs were not good for anaerobic digestion.

Julie Lewis stated that one of the reasons they separated food waste was because it used to go in the garden waste bin. Separated it could go to WCC's selected anaerobic digestion facility.

4. Update on the development of the Resources and Waste Strategy for England

Ruth Dixon presented a PowerPoint and highlighted the following points:

- In 2018 local authorities (LAs) were told by central government that there would be a new resources and waste strategy.
- National consultations were held in 2019 and 2021. The WWP responded to these consultations.
- The new strategy aims to waste less and recycle more while promoting a circular economy.
- There are three planned pillars for the new strategy: extended producer responsibility (EPR), deposit return scheme (DRS) and collection consistency.
- EPR – companies must pay LA to dispose of waste created from their product's packaging. This includes all kerbside collections, HWRC streams and binned litter but not ground litter.
- Any company with a turnover of £2 million or more handling 50 tonnes of packaging or more is obligated to pay into the scheme.
- DEFRA were working with local authorities and brand owners to get this scheme started and make a first payment to LAs in 2024/5.
- DEFRA stated that Chief Executives of all LAs will be asked to nominate a senior waste officer and senior finance officer in the near future.

- The EPR scheme should reduce unnecessary packaging and make more packaging materials readily recyclable.
- LAs will get the full amount of money to dispose of the waste. The amount given could either be accepted or appealed if the LA believe it does not cover the collection and disposal costs.
- The amount of money that the LA gets also depends on how good their collection and disposal service is. However, money could be given to improve this service.
- DRS – householders will be able to return plastic drinks bottles and metal drinks cans sized between 50ml-3l. It is unknown how much the deposit will be per item but would likely be 20p.
- Each bottle or can in a multipack will also be part of the DRS.
- The DRS is planned to start in October 2025.
- People would either be able to return their bottles/cans to a reverse vending machine in a supermarket or take back to a smaller retailer where they would scan the barcode of the product then recycle the container.
- Scotland were going to introduce DRS first, but this has been postponed. Biffa were contracted to carry out the logistics.
- The scheme would be good for the environment, reducing litter of this type and may encourage people to use refillable containers instead.
- Tetrapak, most plastic milk bottles and glass will not be part of the DRS in England.
- DRS will start after the EPR scheme is implemented.
- Waste collection authorities may be able to claim the deposit of DRS applicable items collected at the kerbside.
- When the DRS scheme is live in Warwickshire, Sherbourne may be able to separate DRS items to enable the deposits to be reclaimed.
- Consistency in collections – this is the most unknown pillar of the new strategy. There will be a mandatory set of dry recyclables, this will include Tetrapak from 2024 and plastic film from 2026, which will be dealt with at Sherbourne when it opens.
- It is believed that food waste will have to be collected weekly and separately by 2025.
- There may be guidance on garden waste and residual waste collection.
- There will be a DEFRA run forum on the 6th July for the new strategy which members and officers could invite themselves to.

Ruth Dixon agreed with Councillor Bell that the EPR would likely cause prices of goods to increase slightly but this would not be as noticeable as the deposit on drinks containers.

In response to Councillor Baxter-Payne, Ruth Dixon stated that there would be a shift by companies to minimise packaging so they would not have to pay as much.

In response to Councillor Bell, Ruth Dixon clarified that glass would not be part of the DRS because of pressure from the glass industry themselves. They said it would be too noisy with glass bottles going into the reverse vending machines and issues with broken glass. The glass industry did not want their products' prices to increase despite being so easily recyclable. No milk containers will be part of the DRS either because the HDPE plastic containers were not included, only PET plastic bottles like pop and water bottles.

Andrew Pau noted that Scotland and Wales plan to include glass as part of their DRS and England and NI do not.

5. Update on waste education

Ruth Dixon presented a PowerPoint and highlighted the following points:

- Officers from all councils work collaboratively on behaviour change campaigns and waste communications.
- Schools can receive a visit from the WCC team and in spring the focus is on composting. Workshops and assemblies are available on request via <https://schools.warwickshire.gov.uk/education-resources/waste-education-schools>.
- Pupils who take part in a school waste assembly or workshop get stickers to show to their families and say what they did.
- Spaces are available for 2023/4.
- Composting workshops have been held across the county in the spring and 250 households have been spoken to about home composting.
- Another focus is our HWRC reuse shops. Judkins shop is run by Mary Ann Evans Hospice and the other 7 are run by Age UK so all proceeds go to help people living in Coventry and Warwickshire.
- There are promotions to recycle electricals and batteries and keep them out of residual waste because these are a fire hazard.
- Textile waste has a high carbon footprint, reuse is encouraged by taking to a local charity shop, HWRC or left on the kerb for collection in WDC and SDC.
- Marketing was done in Stratford on reusing containers e.g. bottles or coffee cups.
- WCC were now focusing on reducing food waste with the cost-of-living crisis.

Andrew Pau informed the partnership that when they previously did a composition analysis of kerbside collected residual waste, 1/3 of the residual waste was food waste. Julie Lewis added that this had reduced in WDC and SDC since they started collecting food waste separately.

In response to the Chair, Ruth Dixon stated that when they next do a composition analysis study, it would happen between September and November. Residents cannot be notified before as it could impact the results.

6. MRF update

Andrew Pau stated that all waste collection authorities were members of the Sherbourne MRF (materials recycling facility) and they were all set to visit the MRF this summer.

Julie Lewis informed the partnership that when the MRF is in its trial stage, it will receive waste from SDC first as it was deemed the cleanest.

Councillor Watson-Merret praised the MRFs structure and noted that it was the first in the world of its kind.

The Chair concurred with this and noted that because of the work done by the councils, it should lead to an increase in recycling and a reduction in residual waste.

Councillor Grocott noted that big organisations were doing more things in the UK e.g. the Amazon boxes were being made in Essex.

Councillor Bell noted that once other LAs see how much could be done at their MRF then others would follow Warwickshire's example.

The Chair concurred with this as it would recycle a wide range of materials.

Councillor Markham noted that the MRF could identify specific collection locations or rounds where there was room for improvement and lead to a targeted approach in communications to increase recycling or reduce contamination.

Councillor Baxter-Payne noted that Coventry City Council did this now.

Councillor Grocott praised the sustainability of the MRF and how futureproof it was. It has solar panels and will use electricity from the next-door Energy from Waste plant. It will use artificial intelligence to sort the waste.

Andrew Pau stated that they would do a video demonstrating the recycling sorting at Sherbourne once up and running. Councillors can visit the [Sherbourne website](#) for information.

7. Waste Partners Update

Nuneaton & Bedworth

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Glen McGrandle confirmed that an enforcement officer had been stabbed by a resident and another had a car driven at them. The incidents have been reported to the police. Cameras were put on refuse collection vehicles to record dangerous driving around staff and this goes straight to the police too. Abuse to refuse collectors was not publicised much.

North Warwickshire

Nothing to add

Warwick

Nothing to add

Stratford

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Julie Lewis clarified that fly tipping had reduced with household waste (residual and green), but it was low anyway. Since residual waste had reduced, they were looking to see where this waste was being disposed of.

Rugby

Nothing to add

Warwickshire

Ruth Dixon noted that the current abandoned vehicles contract is up for renewal later in the year so work will be done from September on this.

Andrew Pau stated that WCC has an 18 month interim food waste processing contract. The county is out to tender on a new longer-term contract for food waste.

In response to Councillor Grocott, Andrew Pau stated that for Warwickshire to build its own anaerobic digestion they would 40-50,000 tonnes of food waste and they only had 10,000 at

present. Discussions were held with Coventry City Council and Solihull Borough Council, but it was decided that it would be prudent to make use of the local commercial food waste treatment facilities.

8. Action on Climate change

Ruth Dixon stated that officers and councillors from the different authorities in Warwickshire met up regularly to talk about climate change. WCC hired AECOM as a consultant on their climate strategy. The strategy has six themes and it covered waste, resources, the circular economy, and green jobs/opportunities. It will also focus on teaching the best practice on handling waste. The strategy has an action plan that would be carried out by WCC in partnership. 1000 residents in Warwickshire were involved in a public consultation between November-January last year and this led to an agreement that more work was needed to be done. It will go to June’s Cabinet meeting.

Andrew Pau added that WCC as the waste disposal authority generated 14,000 tonnes of carbon annually. However, taking recycling/reusing and other work done by all of Warwickshire’s authorities into account, this becomes around zero.

The Chair noted that the strategy did not mean that WCC would stop business-as-usual and it would carry on doing the work it is doing to remain carbon zero.

9. Agenda item suggestions for next meeting

3-2-1 + a year on statistics

The Chair noted that any members or officers of the partnership going suggest items for the next agendas.

10. Dates of future meetings

27th September 2023 2pm

6th December 2023 2pm

These meetings will be on Teams.

The meeting rose at 15:52

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Chair